372 sea breezes, during the dry season (May to August) drive fires across the grasslands against the forest wall.

HOUSING AND VILLAGE LIFE

342 The Yega make three types of buildings each with a separate function; the vernacular names for these buildings are *mando, dobo* and *gaga*. The *mando* is the building where a man and his family normally live. It is a well-built structure about sixteen to twenty feet by twelve to sixteen feet, set on hardwood piles, with the floor about four feet above the ground. The framework is of untrimmed bush poles about four to six inches in diameter, nailed together (the fifty or sixty cents for nails is the only cash expense in building the house). The floor is of split lengths of limbom palm, laid with the convex trunk side uppermost so that there are no splinters. Walls are made of lengths of the two inch thick midrib of sago palm fronds lashed vertically. The lashing usually leaves a space of quarter to half an inch between each pair of strips allowing any cooling breeze to blow through at all times. The roof is thatched with sago-leaf 'tiles'. The house is divided internally into two or three rooms, with a verandah in front. The entrance ladder is frequently the worst constructed part of the house. It is often rickety and dangerous, but even small children and dogs seem to negotiate it without falling. Cooking is usually done in front of the house or, in wet weather, underneath it. Some houses have a mud hearth three feet square and four inches thick, or the top of a forty-four gallon drum covered with two inches of sand, in one of the rooms to serve cooking and heating purposes. Food is cooked in a pot balanced over the fire on three stones or, nowadays, on three empty meat tins. Furniture is simple. There are no tables, chairs, or bedsteads. Sleeping mats are of woven pandanus leaf. There is often a light blanket or two, baskets and bags hang from the ceiling and in every house is a box or suitcase containing the wife's shell jewellery and the husband's ceremonial dancing finery, woven bracelets, feather head dresses, and shell and dog-teeth masks. Another box or suitcase contains the couple's

[824] [824] [417] 252 354 352 353 415

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353 [415] *tapa* cloths, also worn on ceremonial occasions; often nowadays mother's best dress and father's best shorts and shirt are also kept in this box. Everyday tools—fishing spears, pig spear, bush knife, and axe—are stored between the floor joists under the floor platform. A [302] bundle of dry firewood may be stored under the house in case of a prolonged spell of wet [227] weather. The dwelling of each clan fishing-leader is easily recognized by the large seine net hung to dry under the eaves or rolled in a corner of the verandah.

342 The Yega build one other form of dwelling, a garden shelter (*dobo*) usually roughly constructed with leaf walls, frequently open at one end and often so low from floor to roof that a person cannot stand erect in it. A *dobo* is a temporary dwelling, built near the swidden in current use, and used by a man and his family for up to a week at a time while they are working in their gardens, which may be three or four miles from the village. The *dobo* is also used to shelter from rain or to take a siesta during shorter, one-day visits to the garden.

343 [461] [614] [627] [584] A *gaga* is simply a talking platform where men sit for a chat, a chew (of betelnut) or a smoke during siesta time, or after the day's work is done. There is usually at least one *gaga* for each clan in a village. The *gaga* performs an important social function for it is here that quarrels are settled, marriages arranged, and the everyday problems and business of the village discussed and finalised.

291 Everyday clothing is a pair of shorts and maybe a shirt or a singlet for boys and men, and a cotton dress or skirt for girls and women. [289] The traditional body covering for both men and women was beaten out bark-cloth of the paper mulberry tree. This is used throughout [191] the Pacific and is known as *tapa*. *Tapa* skirts and loin cloths are still worn on special occasions, such as weddings and New Year singsings, while many older people wear *tapa* to 323 church on Sundays. The Yega and their neigh- [289] bours are expert tapa-makers but they did not have either the suitable clay or the art of pot-439 making. They used to trade their *tapa* for pots from Ambasi, thirty miles to the north, and [178] from Wanigela, 100 miles to the south. This trade has now declined because everybody can

[P 11-A) [TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 12-A]